K. Pheland hand

A second

LETTER

FROM A

CITIZEN of CORKE,

TO THE

African HISTORIAN.

How History of the Agan of Fowran

Leſt Men ſuſpect your Tale untrue,
Keep Probability in View.

Printed in the Year 1756.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A

LETTER

From a CITIZEN, &c.

Corke, Sept. 10, 1756.

ON my Return laſt Week to this City from *England*, where I have lived moſtly theſe three Years paſt, and being deſirous to amuſe myſelf with ſome of the Pamphlets wrote on the Party Diviſions which have ſubſiſted in this Kingdom ſince the Year 1753, I bought in one Morning near 200 Libels, Lampoons, Pamphlets and Ballads, which all ſeem, by their Title Pages, relative to the material Proceedings in this Kingdom during that Period of Time; but when I had read them, to my Concern I found the Intereſt of *Ireland* was only made a popular Handle, to libel and ridicule moſt of the worthy and principal Noblemen and Commoners of this Kingdom.

When I went to *England* about three Years ago, I imagin'd I had left behind me in *Ireland*, a Set of Nobility and Commoners, of as fair Characters and as much Worth, as any Nation could boaſt of; but on my Return, near Half of 'em were metamorphos'd into the vileſt Hirelings and worſt of Men, according to my new Library, if Lampoons and Libels are to be credited: Had a Stranger read them, and believed them true, he muſt have concluded that this was no longer the Iſland of Saints, but a Sanctuary for Devils. It gave me a real Concern to read ſo general a Maſſacre of Reputations; no Station remain'd uncenſur'd, no Sex remain'd unlibell'd, private as well as public Characters aſpers'd, and no Length of Time cou'd protect from Slander, even the Dead; and this Havock was made under the ſpecious Pre-

text of Patriotiſm, as the peaceful Goſpel was formerly a popular Handle for Perſecution and Slaughter.

The Harmony, and Order of Society, ought to be the chief Object of every wiſe Government, and of every good Man, while the envious Spirit and private Malice of revengeful Men are reſtrained within due Bounds: Whilſt the ſecret Offenders againſt the Peace of the Community are puniſh'd, and whilſt falſe Scandal is diſcountenanced, a Life well ſpent, will be honour'd with a good Name; but when Libels and Riots, Lampoons and Scurrility are perhaps encouraged, or at leaſt not puniſhed, the Peace which ſhou'd ſubſiſt amongſt us is injuriouſly broke, the beſt as well as the greateſt are often vilify'd, private Families are traduced, and even Government is ſometimes aſpers'd. The Truth of this fully appears by ſeveral Pamphlets I then bought, and particularly by one intitled, *A genuine Hiſtory of a certain great Family, taken out of an African Manuſcript*, &c.

When I had read that Paper I really was at a Loſs to know what it meant or who it meant; I plainly ſaw it was a dull, ill-wrote Libel, full of Rancour, and patch'd up with a Parcel of low, mean, incredible Facts, which, from the Nature of them, I concluded had never happen'd, and was only the Product of Malice or Envy. Juſt as I had ended the Reading of that Book, an old Gentleman of Diſtinction happen'd to pay me a Viſit, and found it in my Hand; I aſk'd him if he had read it, and deſired him to explain it if he cou'd: It ſeems he had read it, and knew the Perſons for many Years who were the principal Subjects of it, and who, he aſſur'd me, as little deſerv'd to be cenſur'd, as any Family in the Kingdom. He told me, the firſt Perſon mention'd in that Pamphlet was a Gentleman of a conſiderable Family in the City of *York*, who came to *Ireland* in King *Charles*'s Reign, to fight his Country's Cauſe; that he had behaved well in the Army, and married a Gentlewoman of good Family and Fortune, and was himſelf eſteem'd by all his Acquaintance, during his long Life, ſpent in Hoſpitality and good Works, and that he died about 60 Years ago, univerſally lamented in his Neighbourhood. By this Account, I found a Life well ſpent, and the Reputation of a worthy Man, unimpeach'd while he lived, and for 60 Years afterwards, did not eſcape the Poiſon of an envenom'd Pen.—The next Perſon attack'd in this Libel was the Son of the above Gentleman, who by his great Property, Connections, and Abilities, was, when alive, one of the principal Commoners of this Kingdom: His Son, continued my Friend, has the good Luck to inherit his

his Father's Underſtanding and Worth, and happens deſervedly to have the beſt Fortune and Credit of any Commoner in the County he lives; and ſurely in this cenſorious Age, ſuch Proſperity cou'd not eſcape the Tongue of Slander. My Curioſity increas'd, and I begg'd my Friend wou'd acquaint me who the Perſons were, ſo injuriouſly calumniated by that Grub-ſtreet Writer: but how great was my Surprize, when he mention'd a Family, with every one of which I had the Pleaſure of being acquainted. Indeed the Picture was ſo ill drawn by this *African* Painter, that I ſhould not have found out the Original by it. The firſt Gentleman mention'd in this Paper has been dead above 60 Years, and as he has been already mention'd by my Friend, I think it needleſs to ſay more of him. His Son, tho' dead near 30 Years, has not eſcap'd the Satyr of this *African* Scribler, who 'tis probable, had not the Honour of knowing the Perſon whoſe Memory he wou'd endeavour to ſtain. That Gentleman was bleſs'd with a good Mind and clear Underſtanding; he may be well remember'd as a real Patriot, for he lived and died one. About 50 Years ago he was choſe into Parliament, and was always return'd, and generally for two Places, without Oppoſition, till he died. The Intereſt of his Country was the only View he had of being in Parliament; and he always declared, it was the only Reaſon why an honeſt Man ſhou'd deſire to be in Parliament. This noble Principle he carefully inſtill'd into his Children, who, according as they came to Age, were unanimouſly elected. During his long Continuance in Parliament, he never aſk'd or receiv'd from Government any Favour for himſelf or any of his Family, though ſeveral of them, by his Intereſt, ſat then in Parliament. It were happy for this poor Kingdom if the ſame cou'd be ſaid of all our *Modern Patriots*.

The extenſive Improvements made by this Gentleman at his Family-Seat, and the Number of Men that were conſtantly employed and honeſtly paid by him for above 40 Years, made him a uſeful Member in his Country; his Hoſpitality at Home, and his great Property Abroad, acquir'd him an Intereſt, the Benefit of which his Poſterity now enjoy: His Benevolence towards the Poor was as conſiderable as his Fortune, and at his Death this glorious Diſpoſition ended in many charitable Legacies left by him, and particularly in a conſiderable annual Revenue left by him for ever out of his Eſtate, for the Support of poor old Proteſtants not able to work; ſince his Death, this Proteſtant Foundation has been compleated and patroniz'd by his Widow, who

our

our *African* Defamer describes as a Papist; but he seems to be quite a Stranger to the Characters he endeavours to bespatter, for this Lady has always been, and is, as zealous a Promoter of the Protestant Religion, as he is of scurrilous Aspersions; all her Ancestors have been Protestants Time immemorial, and for this last Century, most of them sat in Parliament. This Lady, from her Youth up, has been an Example worthy of Imitation, in the several Stations of Maid, Wife, and Widow; the first made her the Darling of her Parents, the second of her Husband, who as a Reward for the best of Wives, and best of Mothers, left her the greatest Fortune that has been devised to any Widow in this Kingdom for this Age past, many Thousands of which she has already given to her deserving Children; not like other Parents hoarding all till Death; the Distress'd are sure to be reliev'd by her, for she is as constant in charitable Acts, as she is in her Devotion. I shou'd imagine she was one of the last in the World whose Religion shou'd be question'd: but this puts me in mind of a Story I heard some Years ago, of a good and great Archbishop; a young Clergyman, who had more Assurance than Morality in his Composition, frequently importun'd his Grace for Preferment in the Church. The Archbishop, well knowing the Demerit of the Suitor, still dismiss'd him without granting his Request: At length a Living became vacant in his Diocess, which the young Divine for many Years eagerly wish'd for; he lost no Time in waiting on his Grace and making the first Application for it: He went immediately to the Archbishop's House and enquir'd if his Grace was at Home; the Servant who answer'd, told the young Clergyman, that the Archbishop was within, but engaged in his Study, and cou'd not be spoke to; the Clergyman protested he had Business of the greatest Consequence with the Archbishop, and so warmly importun'd the Servant, that he got Admittance. He found the Archbishop in his Study, very intent in reading a Folio relative to the Popish Religion, and several other Books of Popish Controversy lay on the Table, which the young Divine had Curiosity and Impertinence enough to inspect. He acquainted his Grace with his Errand, and sollicited for the Living: but that good Prelate, unwilling to bestow Preferment to the Undeserving, begg'd to be excus'd; the Suitor, having no Hopes, fell into a Rage, and with a Head more full of Revenge, than Divinity, retired to his Study, where instead of spending a Week in making a good Sermon, he in that Time vented his Resentment in Writing a dull, tho' scurrilous, Lampoon against his Grace; in which, amongst other groundless

leſs Imputations, he charged him with being a Papiſt in his Heart, and that he ſtudy'd none but Popiſh Books: The good Archbiſhop laugh'd at his Malice, and pity'd his Folly and Want of Grace; the Libeller was ſoon detected, and had the laſting Mortification of living in Poverty, and dying in Contempt; this may probably be the Fate of our *African* Biographer, if he is found out, with the Addition of ſome *Shelelah Diſcipline*, which I'm ſure he well deſerves, and ſeems well acquainted with.----To blacken the Characters of deſerving Gentlemen is a great Crime; but to libel Ladies of the firſt Rank, is, if poſſible, a Crime of a deeper Dye. What cou'd provoke even a bad Heart to ſlander the worthy Lady, which this vile Defamer calls by the genteel Appellation of Lady Pug; 'till I read his Pamphlet, I did not know her Ladyſhip had an Enemy upon Earth: She lays out her Fortune in the moſt generous, as well as the moſt elegant Manner; her Houſe is always open to Perſons of Diſtinction and Merit; her benevolent and gracious Deportment, give Life and Spirits to every one about her; good Humour and good Senſe make her an agreeable Companion, and her real Virtue makes her the valuable Friend. Theſe great Qualities endear'd her to both her Husbands, whoſe Honour and Worth were as great as their Titles. Theſe Lords, conſcious of the Worth of this Lady, devoted themſelves to her while alive, and at the Periods of their reſpective Lives, left her all their Fortune as a Reward for her Merit.

This Lady's Brother is as little ſpared by our *African* Slanderer as the reſt; the Part of this Libel relative to him is as incredible as it is groundleſs, and fully as abſurd as it is malicious; I have wonder'd how any one of this Gentleman's Conduct, cou'd be the Subject even of one Paragraph in a Libel. 'Tis true, that large Property is generally attended with great Envy, as it is ſometimes lodged in the Hands of the proud and aſſumeing; at other Times in the Hands of Oppreſſors and Country Czars; but when poſſeſs'd by the induſtrious and humane, by the benevolent and humble; it is a Relief to the Diſtreſs'd, and to the Deſerving. The Uprightneſs and Humanity of this Gentleman are ſo remarkable where he lives, that the Husbandman thinks himſelf happy if he can become his Tenant, and the Borrower thinks himſelf lucky if he becomes his Debtor; the one is ſure of having the moſt indulgent Landlord, and the other the moſt compaſſionate Creditor; I have known two Families go from this Country to be his Tenants, ſolely on Account of his Uprightneſs and Lenity. I happen to have an Eſtate within a few Miles of this Gentle-

man's

man's Seat, and a few Years ago, a Tenant of mine there, being in Arrear to me, run away by Night with his Stock; I was then in that Country, and the next Day I purſued him, and by Chance found him and his Cattle; I was obliged, on my Return, to go through the Manor in which this Gentleman lives, and being overtaken by Night, I order'd my Servants to put the Cattle in the Pariſh Pound till Morning; but I was inform'd by a ſubſtantial Farmer in that Neighbourhood, that there was not a Pound within five Miles of his Landlord's Houſe; this was ſo uncommon, that I ask'd him how his Landlord cou'd get his Rents collected, in ſo extenſive a Tract of Ground, without a Pariſh Pound; the Farmer aſſur'd me he was a Tenant to that Gentleman near twenty Years, and in all that Time, he never knew his Landlord had ever diſtrain'd a Tenant, though he confeſs'd indeed ſome of them deſerv'd it; this Account made ſuch an Impreſſion on me, that the next Day I enquir'd into the Reality of it, and found the honeſt Farmer had told me the Truth. I muſt confeſs, from what I have obſerv'd of this Gentleman in private Life, I ſcarce know any one bleſs'd with more amiable Qualities: He is a Father to his poor Relations, and a Support to his poor Friends, he is juſt and humane in his Dealings, firm to his Engagements, and ſteady in his Friendſhip; he never forgets a Favour done him, and takes the firſt Opportunity of gratefully repaying it: A ſingular Inſtance of this I lately heard of him from one of the Burgeſſes of the Corporation for which this Gentleman is return'd, who aſſur'd me, that ſince this Gentleman ſat in Parliament, he has done ſome material Piece of Service for every individual Perſon that elected him; to ſome he has given beneficial Leaſes, and for others he has got Employments: I cou'd wiſh this kind of Gratitude were oftner practiſed, but I'm ſorry to ſay, that generally the elected think more of providing for themſelves, than for their Conſtituents: I have frequently heard of great Bribes given, and great Promiſes made, before an Election, but not often remember'd after. I can't account how ſuch a Perſon as this cou'd fall under the Cenſure of even this barbarous *African*, who ſpares neither the Living or the Dead. Ought this Gentleman be libell'd, becauſe he thought favourably of the Adminiſtration in 1753, or becauſe he had a good Opinion of a chief Governor, who ſo long and ſo often had recommended himſelf to this Kingdom, not only by his juſt and mild Adminiſtration while here, but by his conſtant Attention to the Welfare of *Ireland*, while he was employ'd in other Poſts of the greateſt Truſt and Profit in *Great Britain*? His Majeſty

has

has been pleaſed to honour that noble Peer with the higheſt Marks of his Eſteem, tho' our *African* Writer honours him with the Title of *Old Bite*. Is a Gentleman to be lampoon'd, becauſe he eſteems one of the moſt hopeful Noblemen in the Parliament of *England* and *Ireland*? a Nobleman bred in our Univerſity, and an Ornament to it; a Nobleman remarkable for his great Abilities and Spirit, as a Soldier, and a Stateſman; a Nobleman early diſtinguiſh'd by our moſt gracious Sovereign, with great Marks of his Royal Favour; but the higheſt Favour conferred on him by our *African* Defamer is the elegant Appellation of a *Scab*.

Perhaps this Writer may think there is ſtrong Reaſoning in bad Words, and great Eloquence in ſcurrilous Language: were that Fact, he might take Precedence of *Lock* and *Cicero*; though our *African* Libeller has painted theſe two great Men in ſuch black Colours, that one might naturally hope his Malice was ſatiated, yet not ſatisfied with his Invectives againſt them, he ſays there is another deeper Rogue than either; thus he charitably and elegantly deſcribes the Head of our Church, and the firſt Perſon in the Kingdom we live, whoſe Humility and Affability add a Luſtre to his high Station, and whoſe Hoſpitality and Charity muſt endear him to Mankind; the Beauties of his Mind exceed thoſe of his Perſon; his Learning as a Divine is great, and as a Stateſman not inferior; how happy would all epiſcopal Tenants be, if the Bench of Biſhops would imitate his Example in the generous Treatment he gives his Tenants, who thrive and proſper under his eaſy Fines and kind Dealings; his great Income is ſpent amongſt us, and not hoarded up, or laid out in *England*, as is too often practiſed. Though great and numerous are the Benefices in his Gift, they are not beſtowed on *Engliſh* Friends or Acquaintance, but, like a true Patriot, he confers them on the Deſerving of the Land we live in. Few have been intruſted with ſo much Power as this great Man, and none has exerciſed it more mildly or more faithfully; our *African* Hiſtorian informs us, theſe three Perſons were *Jemmy's* Patrons: I heard ſo, and I believe that is the only true Sentence in his whole Pamphlet; I know but few who would not covet the Acquaintance and much more the Patronage of ſuch good and great Men.

When Truth is not regarded, we ſometimes ſee a good-natured Act ridiculed, and an Act of Courage repreſented as an Act of Cowardice; this Remark is fully verified in a Paragraph of that Pamphlet in which a Duel is mentioned. In my Way from *Dublin* to this City, I happened to ſtop the

Morning of that Duel at the Town where it was fought, and I might ſay was an Eye-witneſs of that Tranſaction: and however prone to Detraction our *African* Hiſtorian may be, he in vain attempts to leſſen the Courage or Good-nature manifeſted on that Occaſion, by the Perſon he would fain diſparage; if this Gentleman had not higher Notions of Friendſhip than uſual, and more Courage than is neceſſary, he need not have thruſt himſelf into that Duel, in which he embarked, by zealouſly juſtifying and defending the Conduct of his abſent Friend, and ſooner than give up his Friend, he chearfully fought his Quarrel. Should our *African* Defamer be detected and ferretted out of his obſcure Den of Slander, he may then be convinced, there is Courage where he aſcribes none: but probably the Author is as little worth Notice as his Book.

This is the only Pamphlet I recollect ever to have read, in which not one ſingle Paragraph is true. The whole might as well and perhaps more properly be applyed to any other Set of People, that a ſcurrilous Writer ſhould think proper to abuſe: What a bad Heart muſt that Man have, who could premeditately ſet about ſo un-chriſtian a Work, as to invent a Pamphlet of low ſcurrilous Falſhoods (which I think not worth Adſwering) in order to defame inoffending, unexceptionable, worthy Perſons, of all Ranks and Sexes, dead and alive—Can there be a more dangerous hurtful Member of Society than ſuch a Miſcreant as this? he has leſs to ſay for himſelf than a Pirate or Robber; 'tis true, they plunder, but it is to inrich themſelves: the Slanderer attempts to rob you of what is dearer than Wealth, without the Temptation of ſerving himſelf; he is a Volunteer in the Service of Iniquity without Pay or Reward; for can any impartial Perſon doubt, but a Man who falſely ſlanders his Neighbour, would as freely rob him of his Purſe, if the Gallows did not ſtare him in the Face.

Our Legiſlature having lately made ſeveral Laws for taking and killing deſtructive Animals, I wiſh they had remembered Libellers and given them a Place in the Liſt of Vermin; can't a Defamer do more Harm in an Hour, than a Kite, an Otter, or a Rat can do in a Year? yet the more deſtructive Animal eſcapes Death, while a Reward is given by Law for killing the leſs injurious Vermin; ſhould Libelling for ſome Years to come, make the ſame ſucceſsful uninterrupted Progreſs it has for ſome Years paſt, I think it probable, we may ſhortly ſee every conſiderable Perſon in the Kingdom villified in Print. If a chief Governor ſhould deny a Suiter his Requeſt, he may in Revenge be ſlandered; if a Landlord ſues a Tenant

for

for Rent, he may be libelled by his Tenant; if a Biſhop ſhould Refuſe a Living to a revengeful Curate, he may the Week following ſee himſelf painted as black as the Gown he wears; nay perhaps we live to ſee every Judge in the Land libell'd for not decreeing in Favour of every Plaintiff: ſomething ſimilar to this happen'd to my own Knowledge; I was in a Printer's Shop in *Dublin* when a Man came into it, who ſeem'd in a violent Emotion: he called the Printer aſide, and after half an Hour's loud Talk, he went away much diſpleaſed with the Printer. I had the Curioſity to ask the Printer, (who was a Friend of mine) the Cauſe of that angry Interview; He told me the Gentleman, that was ſpeaking to him, had been a Revenue Officer, and was lately broke (very deſervedly) by one of the Commiſſioners: That in Reſentment, he had wrote a Libel againſt that Commiſſioner, and wanted the Printer to publiſh it; but the Printer being a little more ſcrupulous than ſome of his Brethren, and knowing the Commiſſioner to be a Man of Worth, refuſed printing the Libel, which ſo highly offended the caſhier'd Officer, that he went away in a Rage: However, it ſeems, he ſoon met with a leſs conſcientious Bookſeller, for the Week following, I read this Libel, and a ſcurrilous one it was; thus in Revenge, publiſh'd againſt a Gentleman for doing his Duty to his King and Country. I am ſorry the Dignity of the Preſs has fallen thus low: In former Times the Purity of the Preſs was ſo general, that whatever was in Print was generally believ'd to be true; but if that were the Caſe at preſent, in what a ſhocking Light wou'd very many of our principal Lords and Commoners appear to the reſt of the World; but I'm ſorry to ſay, we have often leſs Reaſon to believe what we read in Print, than what we hear at a Tea-Table: nay, 'twas thought to be a Diſreſpect to be omitted out of a Lampoon, in our late general Scene of Slander.---And an Example of this comes freſh into my Memory; about two Years ago, I was in *White*'s Chocolate Houſe in *London*, when the *Iriſh* News Papers came in; that Poſt brought a Lampoon againſt many of the *Iriſh* Commoners: An *Iriſh* Member, lately come to *England*, then ſat next to me in the Coffee-Houſe; when I read it and found his Name was not mention'd, I gave it to him to amuſe himſelf, and I thought he wou'd be pleas'd, to find that no Part thereof was applyed to him: but I ſoon perceiv'd my Miſtake, for he was much offended at the Author, as not thinking him of Weight enough to be remember'd amongſt his Brethren. Thus little regarded is groundleſs Slander.

Satyr well-timed, and juſtly applied, may curb Vice and promote Virtue, but it loſes a great Part of its Efficacy in being too general; it ought to be uſed as ſeldom as poſſible, and only when Lenitives can have no Effect.

The Liberty of the Preſs, when properly regulated, is like a Sword of Defence in the Hands of a Guardian Angel, and may be truly conſidered as one of the darling Privileges of the People, and one of the Bulwarks of our Conſtitution; but when this Liberty becomes Licentiouſneſs, when it publiſhes mean Falſhoods inſtead of bold edifying Truths, it no longer continues a Benefit, but becomes a Detriment, to the Public: The Dignity of the Preſs is debaſed when Truth does not hold the Pen, and when private Pique has any Share in the Compoſition: A Libeller full of Malice and Revenge, regardleſs of Decency and Truth, inſtead of hurting, generally ſerves the Perſon he would diſpraiſe; he may pine with Envy at the Proſperity of the Man he wou'd villify, but, like *Æſop*'s Viper, gnawing the File, he can make no Impreſſion on the Character he endeavours to wound.

PHILANTROPOS.

4 AP 54